
Public Scoping Report

Hanford Reach National Monument



Comprehensive Conservation Plan & Environmental Impact Statement

Prepared for the

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
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1.0 INTRODUCTION

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) initiated a formal public scoping process on June 12, 2002, to gather input from the public on development of a Comprehensive Conservation Plan (CCP) and related Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for the Hanford Reach National Monument (Monument). The CCP will describe the future conditions of Monument and provide long-range guidance and management direction to accomplish the purposes of the refuge. The accompanying EIS will describe the management alternatives, and their individual effects on resources and the environment. Guidance for the EIS is derived from the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations for implementation (40 CFR 1500-1508).

Public scoping is the formal process of giving individuals and organizations the opportunity to comment and offer input on issues, concerns and opportunities that should be considered in the EIS. Public scoping is the first opportunity under the NEPA, not the last, for the public, affected governments and other interested parties to provide input.

Planning and decision-making are grounded in the rules and regulations of the 1997 National Wildlife Refuge System (Refuge System) Improvement Act (Act). The Act requires the Service to administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management and, where appropriate, restoration of biological systems for the benefit of present and future generations. The Act also requires the Service to initiate comprehensive conservation planning efforts on all refuge units within a specified time period. The plan must support the mission of the Refuge System and the purpose of each refuge and are to be updated every 15 years. The plan also needs to support two important principles of the Act: (1) maintain the biological integrity, diversity and environmental health of the refuge system; and (2) facilitate compatible wildlife-dependent recreation. The Service recognizes six primary wildlife-dependent recreation activities:

- Hunting
- Fishing
- Wildlife observation
- Photography
- Environmental education
- Interpretation

The Service's intent in initiating public scoping was to: (1) to advise other agencies, other governments, and the public of their intentions; and (2) to obtain comments and information on the issues to be addressed in the CCP and EIS.

The Service published the Notice of Intent for official public scoping in the *Federal Register* on June 12, 2002 (see Appendix A). The Service subsequently extended the initial 90-day comment period by thirty days to end October 12, 2002.

1.1 BACKGROUND

On June 9, 2000, Presidential Proclamation 7319 created the Monument to protect and conserve a biologically diverse and increasingly rare landscape.

The Monument forms a horseshoe of land bordering the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) central Hanford site in eastern Washington. Encompassing approximately 195,000 acres, the Monument is superimposed over a portion of the 375,040-acre Hanford site administered by the DOE. The Monument includes 136,000 acres previously denoted as the Saddle Mountain National Wildlife Refuge. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife administers 800 acres of the Monument through an existing permit with the DOE. Running through the Monument is the Hanford Reach, a 51-mile, free-flowing stretch of the Columbia River.

The Proclamation outlines several valid existing rights, and states that the Monument does not revoke any of those rights. However, the Proclamation assigns management of the Monument to the Service, under existing agreements with the DOE, and the Monument is “the dominant reservation” in decision-making. Those agreements allow the Service to manage all lands “suitable for the Monument” those lands not currently undergoing cleanup from the Hanford facility. A June, 2001, Memorandum of Understanding between the DOE and Service allows the Service to manage the Monument as part of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

1.2 FEDERAL PLANNING ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Secretary of the Interior chartered a Federal Planning Advisory Committee (Committee) in January, 2000, under regulations of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (FACA) to ensure the Service considers input from a diverse group of area stakeholders on the long-term management plan.

The Committee is comprised of a group of thirteen different stakeholders in the local community, representing state, county, city, Native American, economic development, environment/conservation, outdoor recreation, education, scientific/academic (three seats), utilities/irrigation, and public-at-large interests. The Committee’s purpose is to make recommendations to the Service and DOE on the preparation of a long-term management plan for the Monument. It focuses on advice that identifies and reconciles, where possible, land management issues while meeting the Proclamation’s directives to protect the biological, scientific, archaeological, historical, geological and paleontological objects of interest in the Monument.

The Committee is managed and regulated under provisions of the FACA, as amended July 19, 2001 (41 CFR Parts 101-6 and 102-3). Each FACA Committee is chartered for a period of two years, at which time the Committee either dissolves or is re-chartered. This Committee was initially chartered in January, 2000.

The Committee has met nine times to date and has already offered considerable and valuable advice to the Service and DOE. For example, the Committee produced issues documents related to Public

Use and Access, Resource Protection, and Valid Existing Rights. The preliminary issues, concerns and opportunities identified by the Committee helped the Service coordinate and design the Planning Workbook used throughout the public scoping process. Those reports are attached in Appendix B.

While the Committee scope encompasses a much larger time frame than the intensive public scoping period, the Committee had a direct role in public scoping in three ways:

- Committee sub-groups identified and developed Issues Reports that assisted the Service in developing the Planning Workbook used during public scoping.
- Committee meetings are always an opportunity for public comment. The Committee held one session during scoping, on August 14, and had met seven times prior to that meeting.
- Committee members attended and staffed tables at each of the four public scoping meetings.

2.0 SCOPING PHASE FOR THE CCP/EIS

The public scoping process involved a variety of elements in seeking public input and comment on issues, concerns and opportunities to consider in the CCP/EIS. Elements of the scoping process included:

- Publication of the Notice of Intent in the *Federal Register* on June 12, 2002.
- A Federal Planning Advisory Committee meeting on August 14, 2002.
- Distribution of news releases and public service announcements to local media and other public information sources announcing a Monument Open House and the four public meetings.
- Phone and electronic mail outreach to stakeholders inviting them to the scoping meetings.
- Letters of invitation to, and a meeting with, potential Cooperating Agencies.
- Four public scoping meetings.
- Distribution of Planning Update #1 (newsletter).
- Evaluation and cataloguing of oral and written comments received during scoping, of which this analysis is a part.

2.1 NOTICE OF INTENT

The Notice of Intent to prepare the CCP/EIS for the Monument was published in the *Federal Register* on June 12, 2002 (Appendix A). The notice outlined the intent and purpose of conducting the CCP/EIS for the Monument, with details on the initial 90-day scoping period. This original comment period was subsequently extended 30 days to October 12, 2002. The notice also identified Service contacts. In addition to this basic information, the notice provided supplementary information on the planning process, public involvement, tribal government involvement, the Committee, and the history of the Monument.

Much additional information was provided in the notice, including: 1) an explanation of the Monument's purpose as described in the Proclamation; 2) a description of the initial issues, concerns

and opportunities as developed by the Committee; and 3) a description of recent land use and resource planning efforts. Six management units were detailed in the notice:

- Wahluke Unit (Saddle Mountain National Wildlife Refuge; 57,000 acres)
- Fitzner-Eberhardt Arid Lands Ecology Reserve Unit (77,000 acres)
- Saddle Mountain Unit (Saddle Mountain National Wildlife Refuge; 30,000 acres)
- McGee Ranch/Riverlands Unit (10,000 acres)
- Vernita Bridge Unit (800 acres)
- River Corridor Unit (20,000 acres)

2.2 OTHER PUBLIC NOTICES

The planning team sent an initial news release to all local media contacts in television, newspaper, radio and other mass media outlets (e.g., organization newsletters). A week prior to each of the four public scoping meetings, the planning team sent a public service announcement to the mass media contacts with specific information on the meeting location and meeting format.

Additionally, the planning team made phone calls prior to each meeting to all elected and government officials, area residents, and organizations interested in the Monument to remind them of the meeting. At the same time, the project team sent a public notice via e-mail to a distribution list of people and organizations interested in receiving information on the Monument. The Service also mailed Planning Update #1 to those in the Hanford mailing data base on August 9, 2002.

Finally, the *Hanford Reach* published a newspaper article on the Monument and the scoping meetings. The *Hanford Reach* is a DOE news print publication distributed to all employees associated with the Hanford site, including government employees and contractors.

2.3 PUBLIC SCOPING MEETINGS

The four meetings were held during the 120-day comment period. During that time, Service staff accepted official comments several ways: 1) oral comments captured on flipcharts at the scoping meetings; 2) emails or letters sent to the Service's Regional (Portland, Oregon) or Monument Offices; 3) completion of the Planning Workbook; or 4) completion of a comment sheet included in Planning Update #1. The date and place of each of the four meetings were:

- August 28, 2002 6-9 p.m. Wahluke School District, Mattawa, Washington
- September 5, 2002 6-9 p.m. Seattle Airport Radisson Hotel, Seattle, Washington
- September 9, 2002 4-9 p.m. Washington State University Tri-Cities Campus, Richland, Washington
- September 17, 2002 6-9 p.m. Yakima Convention Center, Yakima, Washington

The public scoping meetings were structured as an open house. Participants visited seven program management areas, as defined by Service staff. The seven stations at each public scoping meeting were:

- Monument Orientation / Valid Existing Rights
- Public Use / Access and Research
- Habitat, Wildlife and Fisheries
- Fire Management
- Historical and Cultural Resources
- Geological and Paleontological Resources
- Federal Planning Advisory Committee and Vision of the Monument

The room layout at each of the public scoping meetings encouraged participants to first receive an orientation to the meeting, then to move about the room to visit program areas that met their interests.

At the orientation table, participants were asked to sign-in on the official record of attendance. At that time, they were also able to provide contact information if they were interested in receiving periodic updates throughout the planning process. Additionally, they were provided a room layout map, details of expectations for the meeting and a Planning Workbook to help educate and engage participants in providing comments on the preliminary issues, concerns and opportunities identified by the Service and Committee prior to public scoping.

Each station featured a map and/or graphics related to the program management area that aided in framing the issues, concerns and opportunities of that program area. Service staff present at the meetings answered questions and recorded on paper participant comments at each station. Committee members staffed their own station. Flipcharts were placed at each station to capture oral comments and suggestions related to the program area; those flipcharts are transcribed and attached as Appendix C. Finally, a comment box was placed at the entrance for those wishing to submit either written comments or to drop off their completed Planning Workbooks. (Planning Workbooks could also be mailed to the Service via a self-addressed, postage-paid mail label printed on the cover.)

| Table 1: <i>Summary of attendance at public scoping meetings</i> | | |
|---|---------------------|-------------------|
| <i>Meeting Place</i> | <i>Meeting Date</i> | <i>Attendance</i> |
| Mattawa | 08/28/02 | 22 |
| Seattle | 09/05/02 | 44 |
| Richland | 09/09/02 | 86 |
| Yakima | 09/17/02 | 21 |

2.4 GOVERNMENT-TO-GOVERNMENT CONSULTATION

Concurrent with the planning process, and in accordance with Service policy, the Monument continues to establish and maintain government-to-government relationships with Native American Tribal governments and members while developing the CCP/EIS. Tribal governments are being consulted early in the process and will be on a continual basis.

2.5 COOPERATING AGENCY COORDINATION

The Service mailed a letter to thirteen potential cooperating agencies in early spring of 2002. In general, cooperating agencies are defined as having: 1) authority over the proposed action; 2) jurisdiction by law; or 3) special expertise with respect to the environmental impacts expected to result from an action or from which the Service could benefit.

The Service held a meeting on August 13, 2002, to provide information on the CCP and answer questions potential cooperating agencies had of the Service. At that meeting, the Service presented information on the Monument, the planning process, and what it means to be a cooperating agency per NEPA/CEQ requirements. The Service explained that should an agency choose not to be a cooperating agency, they would still have the opportunity to provide input on the draft and final CCP/EIS, and that there were other avenues for input, such as at Committee meetings.

To date, several agencies have requested cooperating agency status, while others are still considering the option.

2.6 RESOURCE REVIEWS

The Service conducted four resource reviews of the Monument over the summer of 2002. Those four reviews were:

- Cultural Resource Review (April, 2002)
- Wildlife and Habitat Review (June, 2002)
- Visitor Service Review (July, 2002)
- Geological/Paleontological Review (August, 2002)

Each review had its own purpose, but generally the Service conducted each review to get a sense of the respective resources on the Monument and discuss the management issues and opportunities facing the Service with a team of subject experts. The reviews brought together a host of Service personnel and others from federal agencies, local governments, tribal governments and private contractors to discuss issues, and in some cases, highlight some specific strategies in handling an issue. The Service will use the reports in assembling the CCP/EIS to help identify, clarify and perhaps reconcile where possible specific issues, concerns or opportunities.

3.0 SCOPING COMMENTS

The public scoping process generated oral and written comments at meetings, as well as written comments submitted in various formats after the public scoping meetings. Service staff recorded 148 oral comments on flipcharts at the public scoping meetings. The majority of those comments related to public use and access. Wildlife, habitat and fisheries prompted the second highest total of oral comments at scoping meetings (see Appendix c). In addition, 176 individuals, organizations, agencies and tribal governments submitted written comments. Combining meetings and written comments, the Service received a large number and range of comments with respect to the issues, concerns and opportunities to consider in the CCP/EIS. Table 2 displays the number of written comments received from individuals, local government agencies, organizations and tribal governments.

| Table 2: Total number of written comments received organized by sender | | | | |
|---|-------------------|--------------------------|---------------------|--------------------------|
| | <i>Individual</i> | <i>Government Agency</i> | <i>Organization</i> | <i>Tribal Government</i> |
| <i>Number of Comments</i> | 531 | 37 | 413 | 8 |

3.1 ORGANIZATION AND SUMMARY OF SCOPING COMMENTS

As indicated above, Service staff recorded oral comments received at scoping meetings on flipcharts, which the consultant team transcribed. Written comments came into the Service's Pacific Regional Office in Portland, Oregon, or the Monument office in Richland, Washington. Monument staff numbered them for identification. The consultant and Service reviewed and entered each comment into a data base (Appendix D). The data base is categorized by keyword and identification number. One document (e.g., letter, email, comment sheet or Planning Workbook) generally included several different identifiable comments that the sender wishes to be addressed in the CCP. The consultant and Service selected keywords to help identify a comment with either a geographic region on the Monument, or a particular issue, opportunity or concern relating to a management area.

It is appropriate to consider several keywords to view the range of comments on an issue, concern or opportunity. For example, if one is interested in comments on the potential issues, concerns or opportunities at White Bluffs, the query should include "Irrigation," "White Bluffs," and "Geological and Paleontological Resources."

Several keywords help identify the issues paramount to those submitting comments they feel the Service will need to address in the CCP/EIS. In alphabetical order, Table 3 represents all keywords used, with their associated number of identifiable comments.

| Table 3: Number of comments received per keyword | | | |
|---|------------------------|--------------------------|------------------------|
| <i>Keyword</i> | <i>Number Received</i> | <i>Keyword</i> | <i>Number Received</i> |
| Access | 73 | ALE | 24 |
| B Reactor | 8 | Bicycling | 6 |
| Boating | 67 | Boundaries | 42 |
| Camping | 34 | Cultural Resources | 19 |
| Dams | 16 | Dog Trials | 2 |
| Elk | 6 | Enforcement | 10 |
| Facilities | 13 | Fire | 63 |
| Fisheries | 31 | Fishing | 4 |
| Geo/Paleo Resources | 4 | Guides | 53 |
| Hiking | 16 | Horses | 12 |
| Hunting | 22 | Interpretation/Education | 25 |
| Invasive Species | 28 | Irrigation | 28 |
| Management | 27 | McGee | 3 |
| Microbiotic Crust | 1 | Monitoring | 7 |
| Name | 2 | Native Americans | 32 |
| Observatory | 7 | ORVs | 30 |
| Paragliding | 3 | Preservation | 37 |
| Public Health | 6 | Recreation | 22 |
| Research | 29 | Restoration | 14 |
| Roads | 28 | Saddle Mountain | 7 |
| Valid Existing Rights | 24 | Vernita | 9 |
| Visitor Center | 53 | Volunteers | 12 |
| Wahluke | 6 | Wildlife | 24 |

3.2 KEY ISSUES ANALYSIS

Most of the comments focus on common areas of concern, which are summarized below. It should be noted that the number of comments received for each category does not necessarily correlate with the level of public interest and concern, as many of the comments were in direct response to specific questions raised in the Planning Workbook.

Public Use and Access (73 comments)

A few respondents call for reduced public access to protect natural and cultural resources; some feel the current level of access should be maintained with no additional restrictions, and some want increased access. Areas of interest to those wanting increased access include historic sites and sand dunes on DOE-administered lands and the McGee Ranch, Saddle Mountain, and Fitzner-Eberhardt Arid Land Ecology Reserve (ALE) administrative units.

Several respondents recognize that additional access restrictions may eventually be necessary to protect resources, but ask that the Service first seek to educate visitors about how to reduce impacts and to only use new restrictions if monitoring results show that public use is causing negative impacts to the Monument.

A common theme expressed by many groups and individuals is support for access, so long as it is compatible with wildlife and habitat protection. Some respondents point out a positive correlation between access and public awareness and appreciation of natural and cultural resources.

While a number of respondents state that existing facilities are sufficient, many others call for road improvements, larger parking lots, vehicle pullouts, trails, kiosks and signs.

Boating (67 comments)

Many people request new and/or improved boat launching facilities at various locations along the Reach, citing long waiting periods to launch boats during salmon season and shoreline damage from current launching activities.

Some respondents request that power-boating activities be managed to ensure safety and quality experiences for non-motorized users, with several calling for speed restrictions and limits on numbers of power boats. Some people point out a need for facilities for non-motorized boaters, including take-out sites, rest and overnight use areas.

Many respondents urge for protection of the serenity and peace that can be experienced along the Reach. The prohibition on the use of personal watercraft, commonly referred to as jet skis, is mentioned repeatedly. Some respondents believe there is a need to manage boating activities to reduce impacts to salmon spawning habitat and wildlife using islands and shorelines.

Fire (63 comments)

Many (44) urge the Service to place priority on maintaining firebreaks, reducing fuel build-up along fence lines, and minimizing the spread of invasive weeds in the Monument fire management program. Respondents would like the Service to aggressively reduce the number of man-made fires and develop an aggressive initial attack force with appropriate personnel and equipment. Some (8) comments support management targeted at historic fire frequency levels resembling pre-1950's conditions.

Visitor Center (53 comments)

Nearly all respondents feel a Monument visitor center is a good idea, with most mentioning a great need for public education about the Monument's natural and cultural resources. Opinions on the best location for a visitor facility vary widely. A number of people state that a visitor center should be located in a place that is easily accessible and causes minimal or no impact to Monument resources. Those opposed to the concept of a visitor center are in favor of smaller, onsite interpretive displays, information boards, and maps instead.

Guides and Concessionaires (53 comments)

While most respondents believe guide services, especially river guides, are appropriate and desirable on the Monument, many couch their support with the need to ensure such uses are compatible with Monument resource protection and do not cause crowding and/or conflicts with other visitors using the same areas. Respondents against guide services feel that they are not needed or that they could negatively affect Monument resources and/or visitor experiences. Some state that they would like to see the Service provide guided visitor opportunities instead.

Most people are less favorable regarding concessionaire services, with many stating that such uses are not necessary nor are they appropriate on Monument lands. Those in favor of concessionaire services call for close management and restrictions on location and numbers.

Boundaries (42 comments)

Twenty-four comments address connectivity of Monument lands with surrounding quality habitat, like the Yakima Training Center and Yakama Indian Reservation. Eight support Service acquisition of additional lands, like the McWhorter Ranch, to protect and maintain the biodiversity of Monument lands. Some (6) ask the Service to enter into a Memorandum of Agreement with the DOE "to secure first right of refusal for inclusion of any Hanford Nuclear Reservation lands into the Hanford Reach National Monument as they are released from the U.S. Department of Energy for other uses."

Preservation (37 comments)

These comments request the maintenance and preservation of the quality of habitat currently present on Monument lands and frequently mention other values like serenity, solitude, remoteness and natural beauty. Most respondents ask the Service to maintain the biological diversity and integrity of the ecosystems, with nine specifically targeting preservation of the last free-flowing, non-tidal stretch of the Columbia River.

Camping (34 comments)

Most respondents support some type of camping opportunities in the Monument, using adjectives such as “primitive,” “non-motorized,” “low-impact,” “limited,” and “small.” While some want camping opportunities to be located in the middle of the Reach to provide non-motorized boaters a “half-way” point while floating the Reach, others want camping along the shoreline prohibited. Some ask for more developed facilities for overnight parking/camping along roadways and in parking lots. A few respondents call for a camping prohibition on the Monument.

Native Americans (32 comments)

Most comments call for the Service to honor treaties and existing agreements with the Tribes and to provide Native Americans a role in the future of the Monument, particularly with respect to cultural resource management (11). A few comments ask the Service to limit commercial tribal fishing on the Reach.

Fisheries (31 comments)

Comments related to fisheries cover a wide variety of topics, from management of certain species to management of water flows. Some respondents state their support for hatchery programs and other want more emphasis placed on wild salmon. Almost all respondents ask the Service to maintain and protect the spawning habitat in the Reach and to work with others to maintain those habitats and reduce water flow fluctuations that may be contributing to habitat loss.

Off-Road Vehicles (30 comments)

Maintaining and enforcing the current prohibition on off-road vehicles is a major concern expressed by respondents.

Research (29 comments)

All comments expressed support for research activities in general, with some adding a stipulation that research should be compatible with the Monument purpose. Several respondents want the ALE unit in particular to continue to be available for research activities. The need for establishing baseline data and completing inventories of Monument resources is mentioned several times.

Invasive Species (28 comments)

All comments on invasive species support aggressive control of noxious weeds. Some respondents want to address invasive species problems through immediate and aggressive native plant species reestablishment on burned areas. Others stipulate that actions targeting invasive species should be ecologically sound.

Irrigation (28 comments)

Many (16) comments specifically address the need to resolve irrigation issues that may be affecting the White Bluffs.

Roads (28 comments)

The majority (19) of respondents request that the Service not build any additional roads, with some asking for the decommissioning of roads that are not often used or that are expensive to maintain. A few comments suggest the Service pave roads to reduce dust and provide accessibility for multiple users.

Management (27 comments)

Comments on this topic range from specific management requests, such as facility siting, to more broad visionary statements of how the Monument should be managed. A request that echoes throughout many of the comments is the continued input of the public, other government agencies, and tribes in developing management alternatives. Those that comment specifically on management facilities (4) request that all facilities be built outside of the Monument boundaries.

Interpretation/Education (25 comments)

Most of the comments urge the Service to consider establishing an educational and interpretive program for the Monument, with some requesting an interpretive center and additional posted and printed material for the Monument. Comments specific to on-site interpretation state that it should be ecologically sound with minimal impacts to the Monument.

ALE (24 comments)

The majority of comments on the ALE ask the Service to leave access as is. However, most also want to maintain research activities historically associated with this unit, both as a Research Natural Area and as a National Environmental Research Park. Some respondents (9) want the ALE to be opened for managed access, including elk hunting activities.

Valid Existing Rights (24 comments)

Many of those responding recognize Proclamation language which addresses valid existing rights on Monument lands. Some comments support a prohibition on grazing and a restriction on power line corridor expansion. More generally, respondents ask that valid existing rights be honored, but not to the extent that they compromise management decisions or the resources of the Monument.

Wildlife (24 comments)

While specific suggestions on wildlife management vary, most comments call for maintenance of biological diversity and promotion of native species, with many stating that protection of wildlife and habitat should come before human use and access.

Hunting (22 comments)

Most respondents support continued hunting programs on the Monument, with some requesting that additional areas be opened. Several comments are made in support of lottery or permit hunting programs, increased support facilities, and extended hours of use. A few (3) comments ask that hunting be eliminated from the Monument.

Recreation (22 comments—see also Public Use and Access, Boating, Camping, and Hunting)

Nearly all comments state that recreation activities should continue on the Monument. Opinions vary widely on the specific amount and types of activities that should be provided, but “low-impact,” “quiet” and “leave-no-trace” are commonly used adjectives. Many feel that the protection of natural and cultural resources should take precedence over recreation uses. Some suggest that resources could be protected by management strategies such as party size limits, reservations, concentrated use areas, user education, and disallowing certain activities. A few people feel that no management restrictions are needed. Many people want developed trails for hiking, horseback use, and/or bicycling.

4.0 NEXT STEPS

Official public scoping ended on October 12, 2002. However, in the interest of being responsive to the public, it is the Monument’s policy to accept and consider comments received at any time throughout the planning process. At the same time, government-to-government consultations will take place, and the help and advice of Cooperating Agencies will be solicited as the draft CCP/EIS is developed.

In the fall of 2002 through the spring of 2003, the Service will hold three, three-day planning workshops. The first workshop is geared toward developing a draft vision and goals. The second workshop will identify draft management alternatives and objectives. The third workshop will continue work on the alternatives and objectives.

A draft CCP/EIS is expected to be available for public review sometime in the fall of 2003. At that time, the Service will provide additional opportunities for public input, as well as continue consultation with Native American governments. Comments received at that time will also be catalogued and reviewed in a similar fashion as the initial public scoping phase. Public outreach and publication of a “Notice of Availability” for the draft CCP/EIS in the *Federal Register* will facilitate public comment and review of the draft.

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